

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA
BRYSON CITY DIVISION
CIVIL ACTION NO. 2:10-CV-15-MR-DCK**

SOUTHERN FOUR WHEEL DRIVE ASSOCIATION, UNITED FOUR WHEEL DRIVE ASSOCIATION, THE BLUE RIBBON COALITION, INC.,)	
)	
)	
)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
v.)	
)	
)	
UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE, NANTAHALA NATIONAL FOREST, MARISUE HILLIARD, Forest Supervisor,)	<u>NOTICE</u>
)	
)	
)	
Defendants,)	
)	
)	
TROUT UNLIMITED, PUBLIC EMPLOYEES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, WILD SOUTH,)	
)	
)	
Intervenor-Defendants.)	
)	

THIS MATTER IS BEFORE THE COURT *sua sponte* regarding the parties' joint request, during a telephone conference on June 29, 2010, that the Court consider conducting an early judicial settlement conference in this matter. This issue has been referred to the undersigned Magistrate Judge pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §636(b), and immediate review is appropriate.

The Court commends the parties for seeking early alternative dispute resolution, and the undersigned has carefully considered the matter and consulted with the presiding district judge. The Court concludes based on the status of the case, the short-term availability of judicial resources, and the relative time-urgency of the request, that a judicial settlement conference is not appropriate at this time. Alternatively, the Court respectfully encourages the parties to consider early mediation

with a private mediator. The Court does not rule out the possibility of a judicial settlement conference at a later stage in the litigation, if necessary and warranted.

Signed: July 19, 2010



David C. Keesler
United States Magistrate Judge

